

**INSTRUMENTS AND METHODS FOR  
ACCESSING AN ANATOMIC SPACE**

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

An anatomic space of the body, particularly the pericardial space, is accessed in a minimally invasive manner from a skin incision by an access instrument to facilitate visualization and introduction of devices or drugs or other materials, performance of medical and surgical procedures, and introducing and fixating a cardiac lead electrode to the heart. An elongated access instrument body preferentially bends in one direction and resists bending in a transverse direction, whereby the access instrument body distal end can be directed through a path around body structures to the anatomic site by manipulation of the access instrument body proximal end portion. A distal header formed at the access instrument body distal end extends outward of the access instrument body in the transverse direction and supports an inflatable balloon surrounding a working lumen exit port that is directed toward an anatomic surface when the balloon is inflated by inflation media introduced through an inflation lumen.